

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 18, 2022

Ms. Shalanda Young  
Acting Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Mr. Michael Connor  
Assistant Secretary of the  
U.S. Army (Civil Works)  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Director Young and Assistant Secretary Connor:

As you draft the Fiscal Year 2022 Work Plan for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), I write to express strong support for the inclusion of a number of critical water infrastructure projects in Central New York. Coastal communities in my district have faced significant damage in recent years as a result of sustained high-water levels and historic flooding, and deferred maintenance has only exacerbated these challenges. With this in mind, I respectfully request the inclusion of the following projects in this year's Work Plan.

**Oswego Harbor - West Arrowhead Breakwater Repairs and Dredging**

As you may know, Oswego Harbor supports more than 250,000 tons of product annually and accounts for over \$7 million in economic benefits to our region. The harbor is interconnected with 7 commercial ports and in 2019, the harbor saw 334,000 tons of material shipped and received via the harbor. Waterborne transportation facilitated by the harbor supports \$24.4 million in business revenue, 119 jobs, and \$8 million in labor income to the transportation sector alone. Commodities handled by the harbor support \$973.8 million in business revenue, including 5,829 jobs and \$289.9 million in labor income. The harbor is also home to 536 recreational slips, 29 charter boats, and 6 boat launch lanes. For its recreational uses alone, the harbor generates over \$7 million each year in regional economic benefits. The West Arrowhead Breakwater is essential to the safety of the harbor, playing a critical role in protecting commercial and recreational navigation activities. Unfortunately, ice and water damage has compromised the breakwater and left the structure open to accelerated deterioration.

While repairs to the West Arrowhead Breakwater in Oswego Harbor have been included in previous work plans, this project has been consistently overlooked in recent years and USACE has failed to take the necessary steps to finalize repairs to this structure. Given the importance of this breakwater to the physical and economic wellbeing of our community, it is critical that this final phase of repairs be approved in 2022.

In the interest of maintaining operations in Oswego Harbor, USACE has identified 1,600 linear feet of repairs necessary to address structural damage to the breakwater. With 500 linear feet of repairs completed in Fiscal Year 2018 and 600 linear feet of repairs completed in Fiscal Year 2019, work for Fiscal Year 2022 is critical to completing the remaining portion of the project and ensuring that previous efforts are not put to waste. Additionally, completion of the repairs on the remaining 500 linear feet would increase protection for the Oswego Harbor West Pierhead Lighthouse, which is included on the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition, the harbor requires approximately 72,000 cubic yards of dredging every four years in order to maintain the necessary depth for commercial shipping traffic. If the harbor is not dredged and thereby rendered unusable for commercial shipping, shipments into the region will have to arrive via ground transport instead. The harbor was most recently dredged in 2019, removing 140,000 cubic yards from the harbor bed. The harbor will need to be dredged again in 2023.

Finalizing repairs on the West Arrowhead Breakwater and dredging the harbor would represent an essential step in avoiding significant government waste and maintaining the flow of commerce through Oswego Harbor. Additionally, failure to include this project in the Fiscal Year 2022 Work Plan would jeopardize the significant investment that USACE has already made in repairs to the structure, representing an unacceptable instance of government waste. For this reason, I would like to reiterate my strong support for the inclusion of breakwater repairs and funding to dredge the harbor in the USACE FY2022 Work Plan.

### **Great Sodus Bay Harbor Dredging and Repairs**

I would also like to request that repairs and dredging for the Great Sodus Bay Harbor be included in the Fiscal Year 2022 Work Plan. The harbor represents a critical part of the Central New York regional economy, as it currently hosts a number of recreational water activities, including private marinas, recreational boating, and charter fishing. The harbor also serves as an essential refuge area for boats in the southern area of Lake Ontario. The Great Sodus Bay Harbor is the lynchpin in roughly \$9.5 million in annual revenue from supporting industries, which are critical to the local economy and Central New York's tourism industry.

Currently, repairs are needed on deteriorated sections of the breakwater to ensure that the channel, shorelines, and Sodus Bay remain adequately protected. The harbor has suffered significantly from high water levels in Lake Ontario, particularly from the high-water event that occurred in 2017.

As you may know, the harbor must be dredged every 5 to 10 years. The most recent dredging of the harbor was in 2018, when 56,000 cubic yards of material were removed from the bed. The harbor will soon need to be dredged again or risk reduced capacity, which would harm the local economy. Reduced capacity of the harbor may also significantly impact the local Coast Guard station, which relies on the harbor for critical operations. For these reasons, it is critical that the Great Sodus Bay Harbor project be included in the 2022 Work Plan.

### **Little Sodus Bay Harbor Breakwater Repairs**

Little Sodus Bay Harbor is located on Lake Ontario in the Town of Fair Haven and provides safe passage between Little Sodus Bay and Lake Ontario. This recreational harbor is home to commercial fishing activities, a private marina, and the recreational boating community in Cayuga County. Little Sodus Bay Harbor is home to 550 slips, 12 charter boats, 8 boat launch lanes, and supports 90 jobs locally. Finally, the Harbor generates over \$6.6 million in economic benefits for the region each year.

At this time, there are a number of deteriorated sections of the West Pier. Recent weather events have significantly exacerbated the structural failures in the breakwater, and the USACE-Buffalo District most recently estimated the breakwater would need a full repair, putting the cost of the project at \$10 million. If left unrepaired, the failure of the breakwater would lead to potential safety issues for recreational boaters, as well as functional loss of Little Sodus Bay Harbor as a harbor of refuge. It would also have significant negative impacts on the local and regional economy.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. We value our ongoing relationship with USACE and look forward to reviewing the finalized FY22 Work Plan.

Sincerely,



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John Katko  
Member of Congress